



Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Susan W. Brooks
Southern District of Indiana**

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CONTACT: MARY BIPPUS

(317) 229-2403

Fax: (317) 226-5002

Cell: (317) 590-7928

PROJECT SAFE CHILDHOOD ACTION WEEK RESULTS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA

New PSA Campaign Educates Teenage Girls About Potential Dangers of Sharing and Posting Personal Information Online

Susan W. Brooks, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced today that MICHAEL BARNHORST, 41, of Greene County, was arrested on Thursday and charged with three counts of receiving child pornography through the internet from a website selling access through credit card transactions. Earlier today, a federal Magistrate Judge ordered him held in lock down status at Community Confinement facility in Indianapolis. The lead investigating agencies were ICE and ISP, with participation by the FBI as well.

SEAN OSBORN, 25, of Morgan County, was arrested on Friday and charged with one count of distributing child pornography through the internet and one count of attempting to receive child pornography through the U.S. Mail. He is detained in the Marion County Jail at this time and his probable cause and detention hearing is Wednesday afternoon. The lead investigating agencies were US Postal Inspection Service and US Secret Service, with participation by ICE and the Martinsville Police Department.

In all 9 searches, the investigating agencies used On-scene Computer Forensic Triage Methods during the execution of the searches and deployed a mobile forensic lab belonging to ISP. This was accomplished through forensic support from the following agencies: The Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, the High Technology Investigative Unit of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the U.S. Department of Justice, the Kokomo Police Department, the U.S. Secret Service, and the Indiana State Police. Two cases were charged and the other investigations are on-going.

All of these investigations were conducted through the work of the Indiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and the Project Safe Childhood Partnership. The searches

featured a vibrant example of federal, state and local cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of persons trafficking in child pornography through the internet, and in one case, through the U.S. Mail.

The prosecutive agencies involved were the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Child Exploitation Section of the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office. The total list of investigative agencies involved included ICE, ISP, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Kokomo Police Department, Muncie Police Department, Indianapolis Municipal Police Department, US Secret Service, FBI, and the Martinsville Police Department.

Four of the searches were the result of information developed as part the work of the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces as well as information developed by the Indiana State Police. Four other searches were the result of information developed by an ICE national operation. Finally, one search was the result of an operation developed by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

The Ad Council together with The U.S. Department of Justice and National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) announced this week a new phase of their Online Sexual Exploitation public service advertising (PSA) campaign designed to educate teenage girls about the potential dangers of posting and sharing personal information online.

Popular social networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook, and Sconex make it easier for teens to post and share personal information, pictures and videos, which may make them more vulnerable to online predators. Teenage girls are particularly at risk of online sexual exploitation—a recent study by University of New Hampshire researchers for NCMEC found that of the approximately one in seven youth who received a sexual solicitation or approach over the Internet, 70 percent were girls.

“The Internet is one of the greatest technological advances of our time, but it also makes it alarmingly easy for sexual predators to find and contact children,” stated Attorney General Gonzales. “As Attorney General and as a father, I am committed to protecting our children from pedophiles who troll the Internet for kids. The Think Before You Post campaign sends a strong reminder to children and their parents to be cautious when posting personal information online because anything you post, anyone can see: family, friends and even not-so-friendly people.”

Another study conducted by Cox Communications shows that 61% of 13- to 17-year-olds have a personal profile on sites such as MySpace, Friendster, or Xanga. In addition, the study also found that half of these have posted pictures of themselves online and that one out of five teens reported that it is safe (i.e. “somewhat” or “very safe”) to share personal information on a public blog or networking site. Thirty-seven percent of 13- to 17-year-olds said they're “not very concerned” or “not at all concerned” about someone using personal information they've posted online in ways they haven't approved.

In another study conducted by the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center for NCMEC, of youth ages 10 to 17 who use the Internet regularly, 34% had posted their real names, telephone numbers or home address, and 45% had posted their real ages.

The PSA campaign, created pro bono by Merkley + Partners, includes TV, radio, magazine and Web advertising. The ads encourage girls to "think before you post" personal information that would leave them vulnerable to online predators. The PSAs seek to educate teens that the Internet is not a "private" place, rather it's a public place and social networking profiles and blogs potentially release information that can be easily found by anyone, including ill-intentioned people. All of the PSAs direct audiences to www.cybertipline.com to get tips to help prevent online sexual exploitation or to report an incident.

Previous work created for the campaign has focused on increasing awareness of parents and guardians about the prevalence of online sexual exploitation and on preventing girls from forming inappropriate online relationships with adult men in an effort to reduce their risk of sexual exploitation and abduction.

The new PSAs will be distributed to television and radio stations nationwide this week and can be viewed on the Ad Council's Web site at www.adcouncil.org.

"The popularity, easy accessibility and social acceptance of the Internet, particularly social networking sites, among teenagers can put them in a dangerous situation," said Peggy Conlon, President and CEO of the Ad Council. "It's our hope that this campaign will educate teenage girls and their parents about the potential dangers of offering personal information on the Internet."

Since launching in 2004, the Online Sexual Exploitation campaign has garnered over \$150 million in donated media support and NCMEC has seen an increase in reports of online enticement of children for sexual acts. Tracking studies conducted by the Ad Council found that parents and guardians who saw the PSAs were significantly more likely than those who had not to have talked to their children within that past week about chatting online with people who they hadn't met in person (44% vs. 35%).

The U.S. Department of Justice's Project Safe Childhood initiative is a joint effort of federal, state and local law enforcement, along with community leaders, designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile

Justice and Delinquency Prevention. NCMEC's congressionally mandated CyberTipline, a reporting mechanism for child sexual exploitation, has handled more than 419,400 leads. Since its establishment in 1984, NCMEC has assisted law enforcement with more than 125,200 missing child cases, resulting in the recovery of more than 107,600 children. For more information about NCMEC, call its toll-free, 24-hour hotline at 1-800-THE-LOST or visit its web site at www.missingkids.com.

The Ad Council is a private, non-profit organization with a rich history of marshaling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to effect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives. To learn more about the Ad Council and its campaigns, visit www.adcouncil.org.

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